



CONCEPT NOTE

Policy Dialogue

Moving toward the implementation of the ASEAN Haze-Free Roadmap

📅 26 July 2023 ⌚ 14:30 – 17:00 (GMT+8) 📍 Putrajaya, Malaysia

Background

The global transboundary haze problem refers to the widespread issue of air pollution and smog travelling across national borders and affecting multiple countries and regions, including Southeast Asia. Caused by human-induced forest fires, and agricultural practices and industrial activities that release harmful pollutants into the atmosphere, haze poses significant health risks, and results in ecological damage and economic losses for affected countries. Its transboundary nature necessitates collaborative efforts and international cooperation to address the problem effectively.

In the ASEAN region, haze is primarily from land clearing and peatland fires. ASEAN has taken several measures to tackle the transboundary haze problem and promote regional cooperation in

addressing the issue. ASEAN member states are home to 40% of the world's tropical peatlands,¹ among the most biologically diverse peatland ecosystems on Earth, and store large amounts of carbon.^{2,3} Sustainable management of peatlands will play a large role in tackling haze in the region. Collaborative efforts have included establishment of the ASEAN Agreement on Transboundary Haze Pollution (AATHP) in 2002, and setting up the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Transboundary Haze Pollution Control (ACC THPC) to help manage the impacts of land and/or forest fires and associated haze pollution. These initiatives aim to promote sustainable land management practices, improve firefighting capabilities, enhance regional cooperation to mitigate the transboundary haze problem, and protect the environment and public health in the region.

Invitation only

Further, given the El Niño development, predictions for 2023 indicate extreme weather events around the globe, including a rise in global temperature exceeding 1.5°C, and increased risk of heatwaves, droughts and fires. Specifically for ASEAN member states and the region's peatlands, predictions indicate major drought impacts, which could lead to water shortages, large-scale fires and transboundary haze pollution. This makes taking preventive measures and ensuring the implementation of policies/programmes both crucial and urgent.

ASEAN is strategically positioned to contribute actively to peatland management, haze pollution management and climate change mitigation efforts through its regional policies such as the AATHP, ASEAN Peatland Management Strategy (APMS), and Roadmap on ASEAN Cooperation Towards Transboundary Haze Pollution Control with Means of Implementation (ASEAN Haze-Free Roadmap).

With the finalization of the new APMS and new ASEAN Haze-Free Roadmap, member states will need to shift their focus to implementation and reporting progress on these policies. For many goals and targets identified in the APMS and Roadmap, member states will already be implementing national policies and programmes for peatlands and fire management. This provides an opportunity for the region and ASEAN member states to learn from each other and build on existing efforts. The Capacity Development Need and Gap Analysis (CDNGA)⁴ reported that nine member states identified peer learning and knowledge sharing on governance, policies and programmes for the implementation of national plans, the APMS and the ASEAN Haze-Free Roadmap as priorities for capacity building topics.

In line with the above, the ASEAN Secretariat, in partnership with the MAHFSA Programme, will host a policy dialogue entitled **Moving toward the implementation of the ASEAN Haze-Free Roadmap** to be held on 26 July 2023, starting at 14:30 local time (GMT+8).

Objectives

1. Exchange experiences and lessons learned between ASEAN member states on existing national policies, programmes, initiatives and systems that support national actions to implement the Roadmap.
2. Discuss opportunities and ways forward for implementation of the new ASEAN Haze-Free Roadmap, specifically related to forming partnerships and cross-sectoral collaboration.
3. Brainstorm on the next steps for ASEAN and member states to further enhance existing policies that align with the Roadmap, or develop new ones.

The policy dialogue will focus on three areas relating to the Roadmap: (1) reduction of haze from land/forest fires to achieve national air quality targets; (2) reduction of number of alert level 2 hotspots; and (3) reduction of “burned area” at regional and subregional levels.

Target participants and audience

The policy dialogue will be limited to representatives from ASEAN member states, ASEAN sectoral bodies, and dialogue partners. Specifically, ASEAN member state representatives from committees and working groups relevant to peatlands and haze pollution will be invited. These include the:

- Committee under the Conference of the Parties to the ASEAN Agreement on Transboundary Haze Pollution (COM AATHP)
- ASEAN Senior Officials on Environment (ASOEN)
- ASEAN Task Force on Peatlands (ATFP)
- ASEAN Working Group on Climate Change (AWGCC)
- ASEAN Senior Officials Meeting on Forestry (ASOF)
- Senior Officials Meeting of the ASEAN Ministers on Agriculture and Forestry (SOM AMAF)
- ASEAN peatland partners (IFAD, CIFOR, GEC, EU, GIZ, IUCN)

Meeting format

The hybrid session will include short presentations followed by a talk show style discussion with opportunities to ask questions. It will also include facilitated discussions highlighting ASEAN Haze-free Roadmap targets and strategies, and presenting specific topics relating to Roadmap objectives. Two or three champion countries will talk about existing policies that align with Roadmap targets and indicators. Following this, there will be a moderated open forum to accommodate questions and recommendations.

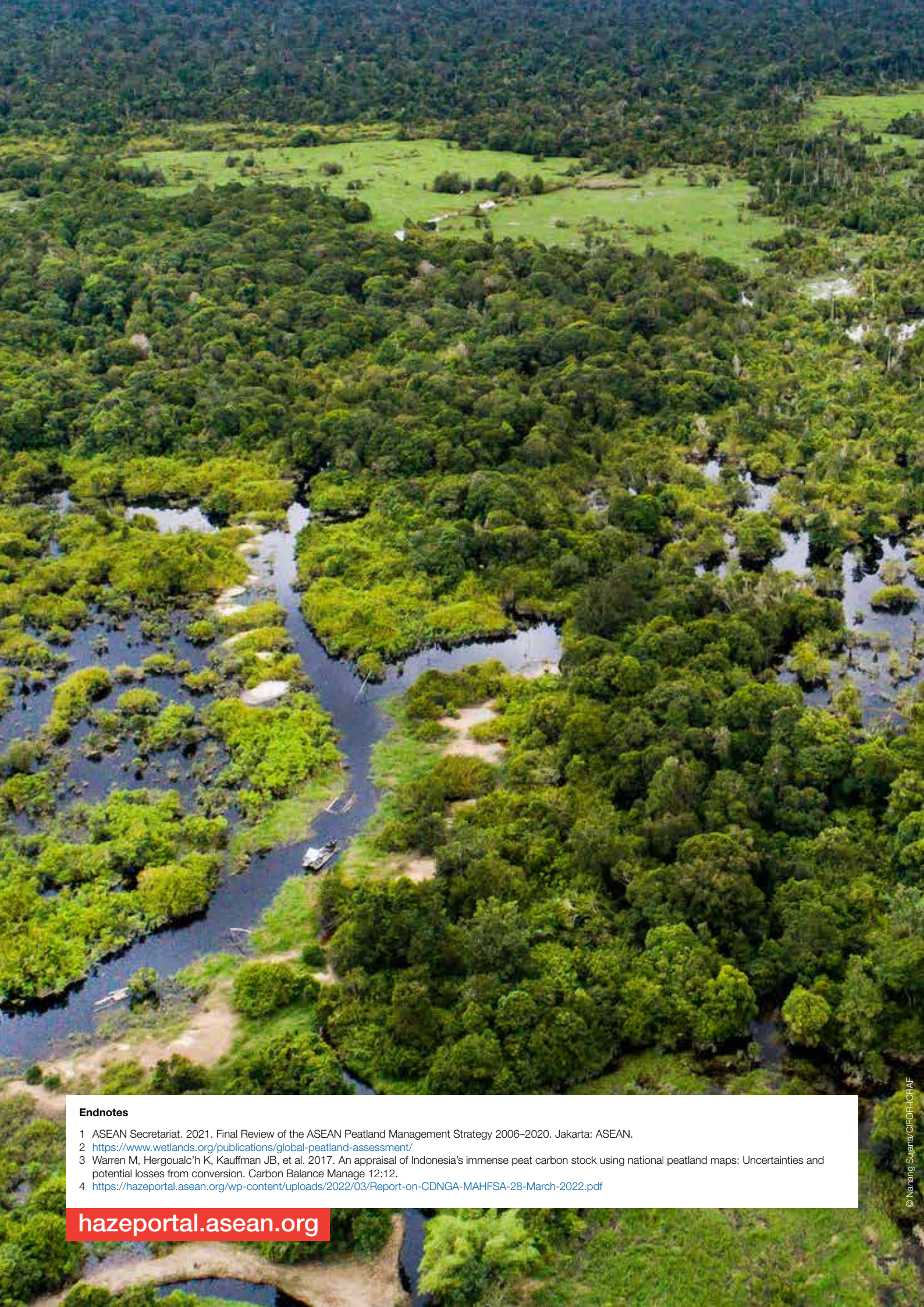
The dialogue will also include a facilitated discussion on opportunities and next steps. Participants will be able to ask questions and share comments verbally or via Slido. The event will be recorded for documentation purposes.

Registration process

Invitations will be sent to representatives of the ASEAN sectoral bodies and partners listed above, and will provide a link for registration.

Indicative programme

Time	Activity	Speakers
14:30 P.M. – 14:40 P.M	Opening Remarks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chairperson of the Committee under the Conference of the Parties to the AATHP (COM) / ASEAN Task Force on Peatlands (ATFP) ASEAN Secretariat 	Singapore ASEAN Secretariat
14:40 P.M. – 14:55 P.M	Setting the Stage Highlighting goals and targets of the new ASEAN Haze-Free Roadmap	ASEAN Secretariat
14:55 P.M. – 15:40 P.M	Session A Talk show: Implementing the Roadmap	Country representatives Facilitated by MAHFSA - CIFOR
15:40 P.M. – 16:20 P.M	Session B Existing policies: Countries sharing their experiences and existing policies in break out groups	Facilitated by MAHFSA - CIFOR
16:20 P.M. – 16:50 P.M	Session C Opportunities and Next steps <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Setting new policies/systems Cross-sectoral collaboration Partnerships 	Facilitated by MAHFSA - CIFOR
16:50 P.M. – 17:00 P.M	Synthesis	MAHFSA - CIFOR
17:00 P.M	Closing	MAHFSA - PCU



Endnotes

- 1 ASEAN Secretariat. 2021. Final Review of the ASEAN Peatland Management Strategy 2006–2020. Jakarta: ASEAN.
- 2 <https://www.wetlands.org/publications/global-peatland-assessment/>
- 3 Warren M, Hergoualc'h K, Kauffman JB, et al. 2017. An appraisal of Indonesia's immense peat carbon stock using national peatland maps: Uncertainties and potential losses from conversion. Carbon Balance Manage 12:12.
- 4 <https://hazeportal.asean.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Report-on-CDNGA-MAHFSA-28-March-2022.pdf>